

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S MEMORIAL DAY

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 388, S. Res. 118.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 118) designating December 12, 1999, as "National Children's Memorial Day."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements relating to the resolution be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 118) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 118

Whereas approximately 80,000 infants, children, teenagers, and young adults of families living throughout the United States die each year from myriad causes;

Whereas the death of an infant, child, teenager, or young adult of a family is considered to be 1 of the greatest tragedies that a parent or family will ever endure during a lifetime; and

Whereas a supportive environment and empathy and understanding are considered critical factors in the healing process of a family that is coping with and recovering from the loss of a loved one: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved,

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION OF NATIONAL CHILDREN'S MEMORIAL DAY.

The Senate—

(1) designates December 12, 1999, as "National Children's Memorial Day"; and

(2) requests that the President issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe the day with appropriate ceremonies and activities in remembrance of the many infants, children, teenagers, and young adults of families in the United States who have died.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I also note that the Senator from Nevada is the chief sponsor of this resolution designating December 12 as "National Children's Memorial Day." I wanted to recognize his efforts.

DESIGNATING A DAY TO "GIVE THANKS, GIVE LIFE"

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from consideration of S. Res. 225 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 225) to designate November 23, 2000, Thanksgiving Day, as a day to "Give Thanks, Give Life" and to discuss

organ and tissue donation with other family members.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I am delighted to join with my distinguished colleagues, Senators FRIST, DEWINE, KENNEDY, LEVIN and others in supporting the passage of Senate Resolution 225, which designates November 23, 2000, Thanksgiving Day, as a day for families to discuss organ and tissue donation with other family members and to Give Thanks, Give Life. The purpose of this legislation is to encourage discussions concerning family members' intentions to donate their organs so that informed decisions can be made if the occasion to donate arises.

As we prepare to recess for the Thanksgiving holiday, we are all aware that this is one of the few times throughout the year for families to take time out of their busy lives to come together and give thanks for the many blessings in their lives. This occasion presents an ideal opportunity for family members to have frank discussions about their intentions on the issue of organ and tissue donation. This is a discussion about life and sharing the gift of life and fits perfectly with the theme of Thanksgiving Day. Although family members may have already designated themselves as organ donors on their driver's license or voter registration, that step does not ensure donation will take place since the final decision on whether a potential donor will share the gift of life is usually made by surviving family members regardless of their loved one's initial intent.

There are approximately 21,000 men, women, and children in the United States who receive the gift of life each year through transplantation surgery made possible by the generosity of organ and tissue donors. This is only a small proportion of the more than 66,000 Americans who are on the waiting list, hoping for their chance to prolong their lives by finding a matching donor. Tragically, nearly 5,000 of these patients each year, or 13 patients each day, die while waiting for a donated heart, liver, kidney, or other organ.

In order to narrow the gap between the supply and the increasing demand for donated organs, we must step up our effort to encourage willing donors to make their desire to donate clear to the only people usually able to make the decision if the occasion should arise—their immediate family members. Although there are up to 15,000 potential donors annually, families' consent to donation is received for less than 6,000 donors. As the demand for transplantation increases due to prolonged life expectancy and increased prevalence of diseases that lead to organ damage and failure, including hypertension, alcoholism, and hepatitis C infection, this shortfall will become even more pronounced. Additionally, the need for a more diverse donor pool, including a variety of racial and ethnic

minorities, will also continue to grow with the predicted population trends.

Many Americans will spend part of the Thanksgiving Day with some of those family members who would be most likely approached to make the important decision of whether or not to donate. Therefore, this would be a good time for families to spend a portion of that day discussing how they might give life to others on a day devoted to giving thanks for their own blessings. Open family discussions on this topic on a day of relaxation and family togetherness will increase awareness of the intentions of those willing to make the courageous and selfless decision to be organ donors, leading to more lifesaving transplants in the future. Designation of November 23, 2000, Thanksgiving Day, as a day for families to Give Thanks, Give Life is an important next step to promoting the dialogue between willing donors and their families, so that family members will know their loved ones' wishes long before the issue arises.

We have received a great outpouring of support for this resolution from many of the national organ and tissue donation organizations, including the American Heart Association, American Kidney Fund, American Liver Foundation, American Lung Association, American Society of Transplant Surgeons, American Thoracic Society, Association of Organ Procurement Organizations, Coalition on Donation, Eye Bank Association of America, James Redford Institute for Transplant Awareness, National Kidney Foundation, National Minority Organ and Tissue Transplant Education Program (MOTTEP), Transplant Recipients International Organization (TRIO), United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS), and the Wendy Marks Foundation for Organ Donor Awareness. The tireless efforts of these groups and others have been critical in increasing donor awareness and education of the public on this extremely important cause. Their willingness to become involved with the Give Thanks, Give Life resolution and to provide their expertise in the development and implementation of a national campaign targeted at Thanksgiving 2000 will be invaluable in making this a national event with far-reaching effects.

The adoption of this resolution is a small victory for the organ donation awareness cause, but we must not forget the many casualties who have died awaiting a donated organ. One tragic loss that so many of us can relate to is the recent death of Walter Payton, an American hero. He contracted a rare liver disease that is often cured if the patient can receive a liver transplant. In Payton's case, the risk of deadly complications grew too quickly for him to be saved. He likely would have had to wait for years for his life-saving organ. The prevention of deaths like that of this great man and of so many other silent heroes is why our efforts in this life-saving cause must continue. A

day must come when no one dies because there is no available liver, kidney, heart, lung or other organ to save his or her life.

Mr. President, I thank all of my colleagues for joining me in supporting this worthwhile resolution designating Thanksgiving day of 2000 as a day for families to discuss organ and tissue donation with other family members, a day to "Give Thanks, Give Life."

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution and the preamble be agreed to, en bloc, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the resolution be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 225) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 225

Whereas traditionally, Thanksgiving is a time for families to take time out of their busy lives to come together and to give thanks for the many blessings in their lives;

Whereas approximately 21,000 men, women, and children in the United States are given the gift of life each year through transplantation surgery, made possible by the generosity of organ and tissue donations;

Whereas more than 66,000 Americans are awaiting their chance to prolong their lives by finding a matching donor;

Whereas nearly 5,000 of these patients each year (or 13 patients each day) die while waiting for a donated heart, liver, kidney, or other organ;

Whereas nationwide there are up to 15,000 potential donors annually, but families' consent to donation is received for less than 6,000;

Whereas the need for organ donations greatly exceeds the supply available;

Whereas designation as an organ donor on a driver's license or voter's registration is a valuable step, but does not ensure donation when an occasion arises;

Whereas the demand for transplantation will likely increase in the coming years due to the growing safety of transplantation surgery due to improvements in technology and drug developments, prolonged life expectancy, and increased prevalence of diseases that may lead to organ damage and failure, including hypertension, alcoholism, and hepatitis C infection;

Whereas the need for a more diverse donor pool, including a variety of racial and ethnic minorities, will continue to grow in the coming years;

Whereas the final decision on whether a potential donor can share the gift of life usually is made by surviving family members regardless of the patient's initial intent;

Whereas many Americans have indicated a willingness to donate their organs and tissues but have not discussed this critical matter with the family members who are most likely to make the decision, if the occasion arises, as to whether that person will be an organ and tissue donor;

Whereas some family members may be reluctant to give consent to donate their deceased loved one's organs and tissues at a very difficult and emotional time if that person has not clearly expressed a desire or willingness to do so;

Whereas the vast majority of Americans are likely to spend part of Thanksgiving Day

with some of those family members who would be approached to make such a decision; and

Whereas it is fitting for families to spend a portion of that day discussing how they might give life to others on a day devoted to giving thanks for their own blessings: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate designates November 23, 2000, Thanksgiving Day, as a day to "Give Thanks, Give Life" and to discuss organ and tissue donation with other family members so that informed decisions can be made if the occasion to donate arises.

RECOGNIZING CONTRIBUTIONS OF OLDER PERSONS

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 234 recognizing the contribution of older persons to their communities, submitted earlier today by Senator BAYH and others.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. 234) recognizing the contribution of older persons to their communities and commending the work of organizations that participate in programs assisting elderly persons and that promote the goal of the International Year of Older Persons.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. BAYH. Mr. President, today I rise as the author of the International Year of the Older Persons resolution to recognize the contributions of all the individuals, organizations and agencies that have worked hard to participate in the United Nations declared "International Year of the Older Persons." Since 1999 has been declared the Year of the Older Persons, around the world seniors, organizations active in senior issues, and representatives of all generations have spread the message that collectively we should create an environment in which seniors can remain active in their communities during each and every stage of their life. This resolution pays tribute to all the United States' participants for representing our country in the various events held in celebration of the International Year of the Older Persons. They have been active throughout the year. It is time Congress added its voice and support the efforts of these organizations and individuals. This resolution serves as a first step in the role Congress can play to assist with the advancement of this year's theme and goals.

The theme of the year, a "society for all ages," recognizes that longevity is relevant to all stages of the life cycle, and that successful aging is a product of long-term planning, lifelong decisions. It is important for the world to reflect upon this theme. Too often in America we focus on the negative images associated with aging and not the contributions that are made when people remain productive throughout their lifetime. America needs to celebrate that Americans are living longer! We

need to acknowledge that aging can be a positive process that benefits everyone in our communities.

The most important goals of the year are to increase awareness about aging within countries and across national boundaries and to formulate policies and programs to promote the well-being of older persons. The principles highlighted by the resolution include independence, participation, care, self-fulfillment, and dignity. The purpose of the year is to empower people to spend their senior years happy and healthy. Although the goals and principles of this year have been advanced internationally, we need to particularly acknowledge that the United States has been well represented by several organizations such as the Federal Committee to Prepare for the International Year of Older Persons, the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations, and the American Association for International Aging.

While America's senior organizations have been deeply involved, it is my hope is this resolution will serve as a signal that it is important for Congress to take the goals set forth this year and continue the efforts to achieve them. Congress should take the leadership the United Nations has provided on this issue and continue to build momentum. We need to not only recognize and assist those spreading the message but implement legislation that actively addresses the needs of seniors. As a member of the Special Committee on Aging, I have learned about the issues that seniors face and have explored viable administrative and legislative solutions.

I know America needs to be better prepared for its future aging population. Currently, about 12.8 million Americans report needing long-term care. By 2018, it is estimated that there will be 3.6 million elderly persons in need of a nursing home bed, an increase of two million from the current future. By 2030, the number of Americans in nursing homes will double and the cost of caring for them will quadruple. Part of creating a society for all ages includes addressing the needs of all ages.

Long-term care insurance is an option that should be more widely discussed among younger people as they begin to prepare for their retirement or senior years. However, often we need raise awareness and encourage people to take responsibility. That is why I support a tax deduction for the purchase of long-term care insurance. In addition, with an increasing number of people needing long-term care, we should make various options for long-term care more available and affordable.

While long-term care insurance for community-based care is one option, being cared for by a loved one at home should be another option. Therefore, in August, I introduced S. 1518, the Caregivers Assistance and Resources Enhancement (CARE) tax credit. It takes courage and dedication to take care of